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contingent
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solutions

CEOCFO Magazine

PROVIDING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

Staffing Firm providing Recruitment of Temporary Work to Permanent Jobs for SMBs in Mechanical Contracting, Manufacturing, Warehousing, Light Industrial, Business, Administrative and Larger Construction Projects



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CEOCFO: Ms. Gentry, what was the vision when you started Contingent Resource Solutions, LLC? What is the focus today?

Ms. Gentry: The vision was to provide great customer service in relations to staffing and that is still the vision today. Our tagline is "Providing the right people." I was on the other side as a CFO of a manufacturing company, so I understand the challenges from the opposite side. This gives me an understanding of the needs from both sides.

CEOCFO: Why is customer service generally lacking in staffing so that you made a point of that at Contingent?

Ms. Gentry: I think it is the timing and the resources. Many times customers need employees very quickly. Therefore, it is very tempting to pull from immediate candidates. One of the things we try to focus on is to interview a lot of people and have a pool of candidates that we can choose from based on what skill sets, shifts, different pay rates and different requirements are needed. Our focus is always having that candidate pool, so we advertise and do job fairs and think outside the box to engage with candidates.

CEOCFO: Could you tell us a little more as to how you engage good candidates?

Ms. Gentry: We are on all the social media channels; including Facebook. We host hiring events at our offices, in hotels and at client sites. We advertise via affordable mediums, we are in newspapers, and then there is word of mouth. We have social media cards that we distribute that has our office locations and how to get in touch with us. Then beyond that, it is making sure that that candidate that comes looking for a job has good experience with us. We want them to tell their friends and relatives that they had a good experience and our office is where they should go.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us about the industries, types of companies and sizes of companies that you service?

Ms. Gentry: We work with manufacturing and distribution. We have also done some fairly large construction projects; on the mechanical side - pipefitters and welders. We run the gamut from smaller companies, even down to five or ten employees, up to several hundred employees.

CEOCFO: Is it harder today to get qualified people in manufacturing and construction?

Ms. Gentry: Absolutely! The economy is strong and unemployment is reaching record lows. Candidates have a lot of options to choose from in all sectors.

CEOCFO: Are many companies doing on the job training or are you able perhaps to work with some of your clients, so they understand the need to do more training to get qualified people?

Ms. Gentry: I would say training has become a big issue. CRS started five years ago in May and the candidates for job postings were much more plentiful. There were more candidates than there were job listings. And it is totally, in the last two years flipped. What used to work before does not work, or I should say is not as effective. You have to talk to more people than you did two years ago, to be able to find the folks that you are looking for. Then the area that we are in has really been growing; the upstate areas. There have been many companies that have opened distribution centers and opened manufacturing facilities. BMW has facilitated a lot of the growth in the area.

CEOCFO: Is money the primary focus or are people looking for something else today?

Ms. Gentry: I think money still seems to be the main driver. However, with money being equal they are also weighing the whole package, whether it be the insurance, retirement, holidays, vacation pay. They are taking into account things in addition to their compensation.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us about being a woman owned business and what the certifications do and how they help Contingent?

Ms. Gentry: To be honest with you I thought, "That is really neat! It could open a lot of doors!" Then I filled out the applications and got certified and went through the audit process, and we have renewed it each year. It really has not, as far as giving us additional contracts so there is not helped there. The help I have seen is like when I am in a meeting with a female HR person, let's say. She will say, "I see you are a woman owned business, I thought that was really neat."

"We truly want to help the customer, to help them to well and especially for me being on the other side, I know how critical it can be to be starting up a machine and you have three lines that need to be running and people do not show up and you are not able to run that equipment; that company loses money. We want to help."- Debbie Gentry

CEOCFO: Are women looking at some of the industrial stuff or is that still ninety nine percent male? Political incorrect as it may be; are women looking for jobs in the industries you cover?

Ms. Gentry: Yes they are. We do a lot of packaging and have opportunities that do not require physical strength. Women on the production floor has increased.

CEOCFO: Are you reaching out to employers in the same way as you are for candidates?

Ms. Gentry: Yes.

CEOCFO: How do you jump off a page if someone is searching for an agency in your area or e at a conference or if you are strutting your stuff somewhere? What is it that attracts the attention?

Ms. Gentry: That was coincidental! I actually had the business development team in and they were saying there are so many staffing agencies, because the staffing industry is an easy entry. It is not a lot of capital to get started. There are many franchises out there. There is just a lot of staffing companies and more and more popping up. My sales staff were saying that one of the main questions they get is "what makes you different than all these other staffing agencies." The answer is that we are flexible, because I am the owner. I am involved in the day to day operations, which makes decisions happen very quickly. We are willing to provide more than just your typical, "Here is your contract, here is your rate; you want these people, here are these people." We all do extra, above and beyond whatever is needed; within reason.

CEOCFO: What has changed in your approach over time? What have you learned about how to relate, both to applicants and employers?

Ms. Gentry: It is always a learning experience. I had a terrific mentor that was the owner of the chemical company that I worked for, Marvin Andersen, and he was customer service focused so crazily I cannot even describe it. However, being a young CPA working for him I would sometimes go, "Wow! That is way above and beyond!" So, I saw that going into this venture. It works.

CEOCFO: What do you look for in your staff? How do you know when someone understands the philosophy at CRS and is willing to go that extra step or maybe the extra mile, depending on the situation?

Ms. Gentry: The ones that have been most successful are for example my first employee Nikki, and she is still with us. It has to do with working with that sense of urgency and with a positive attitude, because we are dealing with people. Nothing hurts a recruiter more than to go through many interviews and think they have found the right candidate, then

they go out to the job the first day and they disappear at break or they do not go back the second day. My internal staff really takes that hard. With that said, you have to be able to shake that off. You cannot dwell on that. You just have to think back and see what if there was anything there that we may have missed or did not think was important enough in what they said and that you could have seen. Sometimes they present very well, but it does not turn out well.

CEOCFO: How do you break down between temporary and permanent? Would you like to see the mix change?

Ms. Gentry: I would say the majority of our customers are temp to perm. Therefore, they do a trial period. Probably the majority would get the ninety-day trial period, at which time they roll them over to their payroll and they become direct employees. That is really our success, and makes the recruiter so happy when that happens. That means that they have done their job. They have helped that person and their family and our customers.

CEOCFO: What is next for CRS?

Ms. Gentry: Hopefully to expand, grow and develop new internal people. One of the things that I really enjoy is developing the internal people, like I said, Nikki. I have known her for many, many years and to see her flourish and grow is rewarding. She just took her Certified Contingent Workforce Professional exam and passed. My Controller is also very young, so I've been mentoring her, so to see other women and other men develop is something I enjoy.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us about your horses?

Ms. Gentry: I have a Paint horse and a Shetland pony. I have not had much time for riding lately, but the grandkids enjoy them and I love to see them everyday

CEOCFO: Why choose CRS, Contingent Resource Solutions, LLC?

Ms. Gentry: Basically, we have the flexibility and the resources to be able to respond. I think my employees will tell you I tend to go a little overboard. Sometimes they get asked to do some impossible things that sound a little bit out of line and I am like, "No, go ahead, you need to do it, we can figure this out." We truly want to help the customer, to help them to well and especially for me being on the other side, I know how critical it can be to be starting up a machine and you have three lines that need to be running and people do not show up and you are not able to run that equipment; that company loses money. We want to help.



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